

## **EXHIBIT PP**




## Altimo Plans Acquisition in Vietnam or Indonesia (Update2)

By Lyubov Pronina

April 12 (Bloomberg) -- Altimo, Russian billionaire Mikhail Fridman's telecommunications company, plans to buy a telephone company in Vietnam or Indonesia to expand into growing markets.

Moscow-based Altimo will make "at least one major acquisition in Asia" in the next six to 18 months, Chief Financial Officer Teijo Pankko said in a phone interview today.

"We believe the initial investment will be billions of dollars," Pankko said, without naming any potential targets.

Altimo, which holds \$20 billion in telecommunications assets in Russia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey, is seeking to invest in south and southeast Asia and form a strategic partnership with a western European mobile-phone company. Russia, where Altimo owns 42.4 percent of OAO VimpelCom, has more than 153 million mobile-phone subscribers with a population of 142 million people. VimpelCom is the country's second-largest mobile-phone company.

Pankko said Altimo is "quite happy" with its investment in VimpelCom and has no immediate plans to increase its stake. Altimo has recently been increasing its stake in VimpelCom as part of its fight with Norway's Telenor ASA for control of the Russian operator.

Altimo and Telenor are in a legal tussle over VimpelCom's expansion into Ukraine, where both companies co-own ZAT Kyivstar GSM, the country's largest mobile-phone company. Both companies applied with the Russian Federal Anti-Monopoly Service to get a controlling stake in VimpelCom while seeking each other's exit from the company. Telenor owns 26.6 percent of VimpelCom.

### Exploring Options

Pankko said Altimo is exploring areas of "mutual synergies" with Western operators including Telenor and TeliaSonera AB, the Nordic region's biggest phone company.

TeliaSonera and Altimo both hold stakes in Turkcell Iletisim Hizmetleri SA, Turkey's biggest mobile-phone company, and OAO MegaFon, Russia's third-largest wireless service provider.

"I would not call it swapping assets, but synergies," Pankko said, referring to TeliaSonera with which it has "continuous discussions" on cooperation.

TeliaSonera would require majority control of assets in Russia and Turkey before considering a swap of its stock with Altimo, Chairman Tom von Weymarn said March 14.

OAO VimpelCom Chief Executive Officer Alexander Izosimov told reporters in Moscow today that the company is considering buying businesses in the Middle East and Asia, though it isn't coordinating its expansion plans with Altimo.

VimpelCom will take a cautious approach to acquisitions and will either buy an operator through a private deal or will form a consortium with a financial investor, said Izosimov.

### Telenor Opposition

VimpelCom's plans to expand beyond former Soviet countries may run into opposition from Telenor just as it happened when VimpelCom acquired Ukrainian Radio Systems, a small Ukrainian wireless operator.

"Imagine a situation when we get offered business in Bangladesh, heaven alone knows how Telenor

will behave," said Izosimov. "How will this collision be resolved? We as yet do not have a mechanism for it."

Altimo today published a ranking of 52 countries based on their investment attractiveness using criteria such as growth in the penetration rate, capital expenditure, population and spending on mobile communications. Bangladesh, China and India top the list.

Telenor's spokeswoman in Russia Anna Ivanova-Galitsina declined to comment.

VimpelCom Executive Vice President Nikolai Pryanishnikov told reporters in Moscow today that VimpelCom will also look at acquisitions in Russia. The company will take part in an auction for mobile assets of OAO Dalsvyaz, a provider of telecommunications services in Russia's Far East region.

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